

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 06270 230647Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 230515Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 363

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6270

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT TH

SUBJECT: THAI-MALAYSIAN BORDER OPERATION

1. AMCONSUL SONGKHLA REPORTS THAT ROYAL THAI ARMY (RTA) OFFICERS HAVE STATED THAT FOUR COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALAYA (CPM) CAMPS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED SO FAR IN SECOND THAI-MALAYSIAN BORDER OPERATION CONCENTRATED IN SADAO DISTRICT, SONGKHLA. ALTHOUGH CAMPS HAVE BEEN DESERTED, MILITARY HERE ANTICIPATES SOME CONTACT WITH GUERRILLAS AS JOINT FORCES MOVE ON SUSPECTED AREAS OF INSURGENT CONCENTRATION.

2. ALTHOUGH PLEASED WITH OPERATION TO DATE, OFFICERS ADMIT COMBINED FORCE OF SIX THAI COMPANIES (4RTA,2 BPP) AND REINFORCED MALAYSIAN BRIGADE IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO CORDON OFF LARGE AREA INVOLVED AND THEY EXPECT MOST INSURGENTS WILL BE ABLE TO AVOID PURSUING FORCES. NEVERTHELESS INSURGENTS ARE BEING FORCED ON THE MOVE IN AREAS WHERE THEY REMAINED UNTOUCHED FOR YEARS.

3. ONE PROBLEM IN SUSTAINING LARGE SCALE OPERATTIONS IN THE SOUTH IS BUDGETARY. ACCORDING TO FIFTH DIVISION COMMANDER MAJ GEN YUTHASAK KLONGTRUATROK, ADMIRAL SANGAT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 06270 230647Z

CHALOYU DURING VISIT TO FOURTH ARMY HEADQUARTERS MARCH 21 REPORTEDLY PROMISED ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO ENABLE OPERATIONS TO CONTINUE. YUTHASAK ALSO INDICATED A JOINT OPERATION IN THE BETONG SALIENT OF YALA PROVINCE WAS IN THE PLANNING STAGES.

4. CONSULATE COMMENT: BETONG HAS LONG BEEN THE PLACE THE

MALAYSIANS WOULD MOST LIKE TO OPERATE, HOWEVER PLANS FOR OPERATION THERE COULD MEET WITH OPPOSITION FROM THAI OFFICIALS WHO HAVE EXPRESSED APPREHENSION ABOUT WISDOM OF STIRRING UP OF HORNETS NEST WITHOUT SUFFICIENT PRIOR PLANNING AND STAYING POWER TO HAVE PERMANENT IMPACT.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: WITH REGARD TO POINT IN PARA 3 THAT THERE IS A BUDGETARY PROBLEM IN SUSTAINING LARGE-SCALE OPERATIONS, PROBLEM IS THAT THAI MILITARY AND POLICE UNITS ON OPERATIONS ARE PAID PER DIEM, IN LIEU OF EXTENSIVE STRUCTURE FIELD KITCHENS, AND EMERGENCY RATIONS WHICH US ARMY NORMALLY TRAVELS WITH. PER DIEM FUNDS ARE LIMITED BY AMOUNT APPROPRIATED IN BUDGET. PROLONGED ANTI-INSURGENT OPERATIONS BY LARGE UNITS ARE NOT NORMALLY PLANNED, AND THE MILITARY BUDGET REFLECTS THIS.

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